

ARIZONA CODE OF JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION

Part 1: Judicial Branch Administration

Chapter 5: Automation

Section 1-50X: Storage and Presentation of Electronic Court Records

A. Definitions. In this section, the following definitions apply:

“Aggregate” means to combine discrete electronic records into a larger file that contains metadata only at the file level, not at the individual record level.

“Inactive” means that point in the electronic document management process when the subject matter (for example, a case) associated with a document is no longer subject to modification, related documents are purged and the long-term or permanent copy of the document is created and maintained so as to reasonably ensure its preservation according to approved records retention schedules.

“Docket” means to enter a case-related event in the register of actions facility of the court case management system. For the purpose of this document, the event is used to properly associate the electronic record with the case.

“Electronic Document Management System” (EDMS) means a collection of computer software application programs and hardware devices that provide a means of organizing and controlling the creation, management and retrieval of documents through their life cycle. It may include workflow software which enables organizations to define routing and processing schemes to automate the business processes for document handling. It may also include imaging and optical character recognition (OCR) software and devices to support the capture, storage, and retrieval of document images from paper (“imaging”).

“Electronic record” means any record, whether an individual document or an individual page, that requires the aid of a computer to read the record.

"Imaging" means the process of creating electronic copies by electronically photographing a page, document, photograph, color slide or other material using a scanner. Scanners record images digitally rather than on paper or film.

“Index” means descriptive locator information about a digital document that allows the user to accurately identify it on electronic storage media. An index in an EDMS is an electronic file distinct from the collection of documents it catalogues. The act of providing the descriptive locator information is referred to as “indexing.” For example, a document might be “indexed” by its case number, party names, document type and date filed.

“Metadata” means descriptive information about a document that is not displayed within the viewable content of the document. Document management systems rely on metadata for search indexes.

“Records” means the electronic or imaged documents and files that reside in an EDMS.

B. Applicability. These standards shall apply to all electronic records maintained by courts, including images of paper-based filings and digital documents delivered through electronic filing processes. These policies support consistency with electronic filing as well as appropriate security and transparency for remote public access.

C. General Requirements

1. Courts performing imaging or accepting electronic filings shall use the Commission on Technology-approved EDMS or one approved by COT as an exception.
2. Courts shall comply with requirements of ACJA §§ 1-504 and 1-506 before accepting and storing electronic records.
3. Courts shall meet the requirements of ACJA § 1-507 prior to destroying any paper document associated with an image.

D. Requirements for Active Records

1. Courts shall store individual records received via electronic filing as individual files in the EDMS regardless of the granularity at which they are docketed in the case management system or what aggregation will be performed later in the lifecycle of any record.

For example, a related attachment, exhibit, and motion all submitted together via e-filing would be stored as three individual files even if the attachment and exhibit do not have their own relevant event codes for docket entry.

2. Courts shall store individual records received over the counter at no less granularity in the EDMS than their related docket event(s) in the case management system, regardless of what aggregation will be performed later in the lifecycle of any record.

For example, a related attachment, exhibit, and motion all submitted together over the counter need not be stored as three individual files in the EDMS if the attachment and exhibit do not have their own relevant event codes for docket entry.

3. Individual records shall have individual metadata and individual quality assurance performed in accordance with ACJA § 1-504 (D)(6) and (7). Illegible or irretrievable records shall be re-scanned and/or re-indexed immediately.
4. To prevent inappropriate access to electronic documents, courts shall enter applicable security restrictions in the case management system for the document, event, or case with which each electronic record is associated.
5. Courts shall ensure that records generated by or received for the courts are preserved in accordance with the applicable records retention schedules and security requirements, regardless of case status or preservation paradigm.

E. Requirements for Limited Jurisdiction Court Records Changing from Active to Inactive

1. Limited jurisdiction courts shall change the case status indicator for each active case that becomes subject to no further action to “Completed” within the case management system that is integrated with the EDMS storing the records.
2. No civil case shall be placed in “Completed” status until a satisfaction of judgment exists or the time limit for obtaining a renewal of judgment has passed. Other case status codes shall be used.

F. Special Requirements for Bulk Scanning of Records

1. When paper records for completed, ageing, or inactive cases within the approved retention period are scanned *en masse* for the sole purpose of archival, courts shall use the case management system event code “Completed Case Back Scan,” “Archival Case Scanning,” or equivalent, in each applicable case to indicate bulk scanning activity.
2. All documents associated with a specific case being bulk scanned may be aggregated when the above event code has been used to indicate bulk scanning. The court shall apply to the event description in the case management system the most restrictive security designation associated with any individual record contained within the bulk scanned file.
3. General jurisdiction court processes shall also identify documents which are subject to approved criteria for purging prior to scanning for archiving.

Adopted by Administrative Order 2012-XX effective Month XX, 2012.